

Tap dancing – sitting down?

I must admit I was a bit sceptical as I walked along to the Village Hall on Wednesday 17th June for the monthly Womens Institute meeting. Apparently we were all going to be tap dancing – sitting down! I had no tap shoes and thought it was going to be a bit of a waste of time. How wrong I was!

After the usual business of the meeting, we were introduced to Adele Clarke, who runs dance classes for all ages, right through from 18-month-old toddlers to 18-year-old teenagers to 80+ year-old care home residents. Adele gave each of us a pair of stretchy bands, with a steel triangle sewn to the base. The bands stretched over our ordinary shoes and - hey presto – we were wearing tap shoes!

Sitting in a horseshoe, we learned a few basic steps. Soon we had mastered the ball tap, ball tap change, shuffle and cramp roll. Accompanied by “Make your own kind of music”, we attempted some simple routines, with varying degrees of success. We might not have followed Adele’s instructions perfectly but we certainly made a noise!



After learning a few more steps – reverse cramp roll, heel and toe – and routines, we tap danced along to Elton John’s “Crocodile Rock”. It was good exercise, mentally as well as physically, as we really had to concentrate.



For the final dance, Adele gave us each a gold top hat. Raising, lowering and passing the hats along from person to person whilst tap dancing and keeping in time with the music initially proved a challenge too far, with the hats tumbling on to the ground. However, after a couple of attempts we got it!

Thanks to Adele's dancing and teaching skills, coupled with the enthusiastic participation of the WI members, it was a most enjoyable evening.



Judith Harrison